

THE TENNESSEAN

Final stretch of State Route 840 should be finished by fall 2012

By Mitchell Kline • THE TENNESSEAN • March 1, 2010

Having a construction crew two miles away has been good for business at Joey Davis' Leiper's Creek Road store.

The Davis General Merchandise owner said crews building the state Route 840 project have become frequent customers at his country market and gas station, buying grilled chicken, snacks and gas. While work is slower in the winter, construction workers still make daily runs to the store.

"With times like it's been, I don't know if I would have survived without 'em," Davis said. "It's been a blessing in a way."

That blessing is about to get bigger. Construction of the final segment of state Route 840 will begin soon. More crews will come, which means Davis is likely to see a bigger boom in business.

Construction of the highway will continue until fall 2012, when state officials estimate the entire road will be open to drivers.

The final unconstructed segment, between Bending Chestnut Road and Leiper's Creek Road, will be built by Eubank Asphalt Paving & Sealing of Charlotte, Tenn.

The company's bid of \$55.1 million was the lowest of 11 bids for the project.

Construction to begin soon

While the state is still in condemnation proceedings to acquire four properties, work on the last section will begin within the next few weeks. The state has paid \$2.6 million for 19 properties along this segment of 840.

"This is a real milestone for the department of transportation," said Gov. Phil Bredesen. "The completion of state Route 840 will improve access to communities in the Midstate, provide increased economic growth potential and give motorists a convenient alternate route around Nashville."

Planning for the project began in 1986, when state officials said state Route 840 would make a loop around Nashville. But in 2003, the Tennessee Department of Transportation announced it would not build the northern half of the loop. The road will run from Interstate 40 in Dickson County to I-40 in Wilson County.

It's open from Columbia Pike in Thompson's Station to I-40 in Wilson County and from I-40 in Dickson County to state Route 100 near Fairview. The next section to open will connect Highway 100 and Pinewood Road, said TDOT spokeswoman B.J. Doughty. That section could be open to traffic in the fall.